

REMARKS

Initially, Applicants would like to express their appreciation to the Examiner for the detailed Official Action provided, for the acknowledgment of Applicants' Information Disclosure Statement by return of the Form PTO-1449, and for the acknowledgment of Applicants' Claim for Priority and receipt of the certified copy of the priority document in the Official Action.

Applicants acknowledge with appreciation the indication that claims 4-8 contain allowable subject matter, on page 5 of the Official Action.

Upon entry of the above amendments, claim 1 will have been canceled, claims 2-4 will have been amended, and the Abstract and Fig. 1 of the Drawings will have been replaced. Claims 2-8 are currently pending. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the outstanding objections and rejections, and allowance of all the claims pending in the present application.

Applicants note that claim 4 has been amended to place it into independent form, which the Examiner has indicated as being allowable. Applicants further note that claims 2, 3 and 5-8 each respectively depend from claim 4. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of the objections and rejections, and an early indication of the allowance of claims 2-8.

On page 2 of the Official Action, claim 1 was objected to for minor informalities. Although claim 1 has been canceled, Applicants note that the changes suggested by the Examiner have been incorporated into claim 4, which

has been rewritten into independent form. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the objection to the claims.

On page 2 of the Official Action, the Abstract was objected to as being too long. Applicants note that the Abstract has been replaced by an Abstract which is shorter than 150 words. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the objection to the abstract.

On page 2 of the Official Action, the Specification was objected to for the description on page 10 of the elements indicated by reference numbers 114a and 114b. Applicants note that reference numbers 114a and 114b have been switched with each other in Figure 1 in the Replacement Sheet of Drawings submitted herewith. Applicants submit that this change to the Drawings comports with the description on page 10 of the specification. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the objection to the specification.

On pages 2 and 3 of the Official Action, claim 1 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e). Applicants submit that this rejection is now moot in view of the cancellation of claim 1. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the rejection under 35 U.S.C. §102(e).

On pages 3-5 of the Official Action, claims 2 and 3 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a). As noted above, claims 2 and 3 have been amended to depend from claim 4, which the Examiner has previously indicated as containing allowable subject matter. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the rejection under 35 U.S.C. §103(a).

COMMENTS ON REASONS FOR ALLOWANCE

In regard to the Examiner's indication of allowable subject matter in claims 4-8 on page 5 of the Official Action, Applicants do not disagree with the Examiner's indication that the prior art fails to disclose or teach various features of these claims. However, Applicants wish to make clear that the claims in the present application recite a combination of features, and that the patentability of these claims is also based on the totality of the features recited therein, which define over the prior art. Thus the reasons for allowance should not be limited to those mentioned by the Examiner.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

Entry and consideration of the present amendment, reconsideration of the outstanding Official Action, and allowance of the present application and all of the claims therein are respectfully requested and now believed to be appropriate.

Applicants have made a sincere effort to place the present application in condition for allowance and believe that they have now done so.

Any amendments to the claims that have been made in this amendment, which do not narrow the scope of the claims, and which have not been specifically noted to overcome a rejection based upon the prior art, should be considered cosmetic in nature, and to have been made for a purpose unrelated to patentability, and no estoppel should be deemed to attach thereto.

Should there be any questions or comments, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at the below-listed telephone number.

Respectfully Submitted,
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AMENDMENTS TO THE DRAWINGS

Replace Figure 1 as filed with Figure 1 in the attached Replacement Sheet of Drawings. Applicants note that reference numbers 114a and 114b have been switched with each other in Figure 1 in the Replacement Sheet of Drawings.